

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
D E P A R T M E N T O F H E A L T H



Safe and Healthy Lives in Safe and Healthy Communities

Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline

In the Matter of Taranath Shetty, M.D.

Summary Suspension

This matter came to the attention of the Department of Health, Medical

Board of Licensure and Discipline through a complaint filed by the Rhode Island

State Police as part of an investigation into an allegation that a patient was

sexually abused by the Respondent beginning when she was approximately 13

years of age, and continuing for approximately ten years. The patient went to the

Respondent's office for an evaluation following an episode of syncope with a

question of seizures. The Respondent performed a neurological examination.

The Respondent requested that the patient take off her shirt and bra; at that point

the Respondent started to touch her breast in a manner which was without medical

justification. The Respondent again saw the patient following her admission to

Rhode Island Hospital. During his visit, he pulled his chair to her bed and started

touching her breast. Sometime thereafter the Respondent approached the patient

and her mother and asked whether or not the patient wanted to start working at

his office on Saturdays. On Saturdays while she was working alone with the

doctor the Respondent began a pattern of providing vodka and soda for the patient

and would kiss her on the mouth and the breast, have her remove all of her clothes

and they would lay on the examining table. This was revealed to one of the patient's friends contemporaneously with the events. Later, while the patient's parents were on a cruise and the Respondent's wife and daughters were in India the patient was asked to move some boxes to his home on Blackstone Blvd. As they neared his house he asked her to sit on the front floor of his car so no one would see her. They had been drinking vodka and cola. When they got to the bedroom in his house he asked her to get undressed. The patient took all of her clothes off. Respondent penetrated her vaginal area with his fingers and penis. This activity was repeated the following week.

At a certain point the Respondent stopped charging the parents for her office visits. She later stopped working for the Respondent and saw him periodically for examinations until she was approximately 23 years old. She was married at age 20. When she was pregnant with her first child the Respondent continued to kiss her on the mouth during office visits. Subsequently, the patient had numerous hospitalizations in which the nature of the incidents regarding Dr. Shetty were revealed to other physicians. This is well documented in the patient's medical records noted by other physicians in the ensuing years leading to her eventual suicide on December 21st, 1999.

Upon receipt of the complaint the Board in collaboration with the state police undertook a confidential investigation of the Respondent's past and present medical practice. On May 26th and May 31st, 2000 the Board took a sworn statement from three new victims who were molested by the respondent in his office. On June 13th, 2000 a 20 year old office staff worker gave the Department

of Health a sworn statement alleging that the Respondent touched her breast with his finger in June of 1999. Those statements were turned over to the Rhode State Police and the Department of the Attorney General. The Board then subpoenaed the Respondent to a deposition regarding these allegations. Immediately prior to the deposition counsel for the Respondent indicated the Respondent's desire to surrender his medical license without condition pending agreement of a consent order between the parties. The deadline for this agreement was June 27, 2000. In the interim the Respondent was arrested and charged with four counts of 2nd degree sexual assault one count 2nd degree child molestation. Subsequent to this arrest numerous new cases of sexual assault have been reported to the Board and to the State Police. The Respondent now refuses to sign a consent agreement in which his license is surrendered. In addition to his Rhode Island License, the Respondent also holds a license to practice Medicine in the state of Massachusetts, License # 57055.

ORDER

After considering the recommendations of the Investigating Committee along with depositions of complaining witness, and others, I find that the continuation in the practice of medicine of Taranath Shetty M.D. would constitute an immediate danger to the public. Accordingly, license number MD 04498 issued to Taranath Shetty, M.D. is hereby suspended until further Order of the Board of Medical

Licensure and Discipline. The Respondent is entitled to a hearing pursuant to ..

R.I.G.L. 5-37-8 within 10 days of the effective date below. "

Patricia A. Nolan, MD, MPH
Patricia A. Nolan, MD, MPH
Director of Health

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a copy of this ORDER was sent ^{facsimile} ~~via~~ hand delivery to David Carroll, Esquire, Roberts, Carroll, Feldstein and Pierce, Ten Weybosset Street, Providence, RI 02903; and Robert Mann, 501 Turks Head Place, Providence, RI 02903 on this 27th day of June 2000.

Bruce W. McFadyen